

**Hingham Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan**

**For** **Group B Universal Standards**

**Tier Level** **2**

**Dates of Onsite Visit:** **March 28-30, 2022**

**Date of Final Report: November 3, 2022**



Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

**Hingham Public Schools**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

# **TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT INTRODUCTION**

During the 2021-2022 school year, Hingham Public Schools participated in a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review (TFM) conducted by the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM). The purpose of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on special education and civil rights.

Each school district, charter school, vocational school, and virtual school undergoes a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review every three years. The statewide Tiered Focused Monitoring cycle is posted at <<https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/6yrcycle.html>>.

Regularly monitored standards are divided into two groups, known as Group A Universal Standards and Group B Universal Standards. Districts and schools are monitored on an alternate set of Universal Standards every three years.

Group A Universal Standards address:

* Student identification
* IEP development
* Programming and support services
* Equal opportunity

Group B Universal Standards address:

* Licensure and professional development
* Parent/student/community engagement
* Facilities and classroom observations
* Oversight
* Time and learning
* Equal access

The Department has also reserved a specific set of criteria, collectively known as Targeted Standards, employed if LEA or school level risk assessment data indicate there is a potential issue; the identified Targeted Standards are assessed in addition to the Universal Standards.

Universal Standards and Targeted Standards are aligned with the following regulations:

Special Education (SE)

* Selected requirements from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-2004); the federal regulations promulgated under that Act at 34 CFR Part 300; M.G.L. c. 71B, and the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Special Education regulations (603 CMR 28.00), as amended effective March 1, 2007.

Civil Rights Methods of Administration and Other General Education Requirements (CR)

* Selected federal civil rights requirements, including requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, together with selected state requirements under M.G.L. c. 76, Section 5 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011 and M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17 through 19.
* Selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Physical Restraint regulations (603 CMR 46.00).
* Selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Student Learning Time regulations (603 CMR 27.00).
* Various requirements under other federal and state laws.

**PSM Team:**

Depending upon the size of a school district and the number of special education programs to be reviewed, a team of one to four Department staff members conducts onsite activities over one to five days in a school district or charter school.

**Tier Level:**

The level of monitoring varies based on tier designation, aligning supports to the level of need and ensuring that districts and schools with greater needs receive appropriate supports to make sustained improvements.

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| Tier | Title | Description | Level of Risk |
| 1 | Self-Directed Improvement | Data points indicate no concern on compliance and student outcomes. | Meets requirements |
| 2 | Directed Improvement | No demonstrated risk in areas with close link to student outcomes. | Low |
| 3 | Corrective Action | Areas of concern include both compliance and student outcomes. | Moderate |
| 4 | Cross-unit Support and Corrective Action | Areas of concern have a profound effect on student outcomes and ongoing compliance. | High |

For the 2021-2022 school year, the tier assignments are based on:

* Five-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities
* Public School Monitoring compliance data from the previous review
* Problem Resolution System data, specifically findings of noncompliance
* Special education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR) compliance Indicator data for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (Group A only)
  + Indicator 11: Child Find
  + Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition
  + Indicator 13: Secondary Transition
* Special education SPP/APR performance Indicator data for Indicators 5 & 6
  + Indicator 5: Education Environments (6-21)
  + Indicator 6: Preschool Environments
* Significant Disproportionality data 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

Tiering adjustments may be made for districts engaged in work with the Department’s Statewide System of Support and have schools identified as requiring assistance and intervention. Tiering assignments may also be adjusted for schools and districts unable to remedy noncompliance within one year of the previous TFM review, as well as for charter schools requiring additional oversight based on conditions of their charter.

**Report: For Tier 1 & 2 Tiered Focused Monitoring Reviews**

Following the onsite visit, the PSM team holds an informal exit meeting to summarize the review for the superintendent or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the chairperson forwards the TFM Feedback Summary that includes findings from the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review to the superintendent or charter school leader.

As part of the reporting process, all districts/schools in Tiers 1 and 2, then develop a Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan (CIMP) for any criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and “Implementation in Progress.” The CIMP is due to the Department within 20 business days after the issuance of the Feedback Summary and is subject to the Department’s review and approval.

The CIMP outlines an action plan, identifies the success metric, describes the measurement mechanism and provides a completion timeframe to bring those areas into compliance with the controlling statute or regulation. Department staff provide support and assistance to districts and charter schools on the development of a CIMP.

Once the CIMP is approved, it is issued as the Final Report.

Department staff also provide ongoing technical assistance as the school or district is implementing the approved CIMP or CAP. **School districts and charter schools must demonstrate effective resolution of noncompliance identified by the Department as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from the issuance of the Department’s Feedback Summary.**

For more information regarding the TFM Review Process, including district and parent resources, please visit < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/default.html>>.

# **TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING FINAL REPORT**

**Hingham Public Schools**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review in Hingham Public Schools during the week of March 28, 2022, to evaluate the implementation of Group B Universal Standards in the program areas of special education, civil rights, and other related general education requirements. The team appreciated the opportunity to interview staff and parents, to observe classroom facilities, and to review the programs underway in the district.

In preparing this report, the team reviewed extensive written documentation regarding the operation of the district's programs, together with information gathered by means of the following Department program review methods:

**Self-Assessment Phase:**

* District review of special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* Upon completion of the self-assessment, the district submitted the data to the Department for review.

**On-site Verification Phase:**

* Interviews of administrative, instructional, and support staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
* Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives and other telephone interviews, as requested by other parents or members of the public.
* Review of additional documents for special education and civil rights.
* Surveys of parents of students in special education: Parents of students in special education were sent a survey that solicited information regarding their experiences with the district’s implementation of special education programs, related services, and procedural requirements.
* Observations of classrooms and other facilities: The onsite team visited a sample of classrooms and other school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services to determine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

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| The Tiered Focused Monitoring Report includes those criteria that were found by the team to be implemented in a “Commendable” manner, as well as criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and “Implementation in Progress.” (Refer to the “Definition of Compliance Ratings” section of the report.) The Tiered Focused Monitoring Reports do not include criteria receiving a rating of “Implemented” or “Not Applicable.” This will allow the district and the Department to focus their efforts on those areas requiring corrective action. Districts are expected to incorporate the corrective actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans. |
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# **DEFINITION OF COMPLIANCE RATINGS**

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| **Commendable** | Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation. |
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| **Implemented** | The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects. |
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| **Implementation in Progress** | This rating is used for criteria containing new or updated legal requirements; the district has implemented any old requirements contained in the criterion and is training staff or beginning to implement the new requirements in such a way that the onsite team anticipates that the new requirements will be implemented by the end of the school year. |
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| **Partially Implemented** | The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met. |
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| **Not Implemented** | The requirement is totally or substantially not met. |
| **Not Applicable** | The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school. |

**Hingham Public Schools**

# **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS**

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|  | **Universal Standards**  **Special Education** | **Universal Standards**  **Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements** |
| **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 15, SE 32, SE 35, SE 36,  SE 50, SE 51, SE 52, SE 54,  SE 55, SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7, CR 7B, CR 7C,  CR 8, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24, CR 25 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** |  | CR 7A, CR 10A, CR 10B,  CR 17A |
| **NOT**  **IMPLEMENTED** | None |  |
| **NOT**  **APPLICABLE** | SE 52A |  |

The full list of criteria and information regarding the requirements can be found in Appendix B of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit available at < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/tfm-toolkit.docx>>.

# **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN**

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| **Improvement Area 1** |
| **Criterion:** CR 7A - School year schedules |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and administrative interviews indicated that although the district designates Hingham Middle School as a secondary school, each middle school student is not scheduled for at least 990 hours of structured learning time a year. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hingham Public Schools will ensure that because Hingham Middle School is designated as a secondary school, its schedule includes at least 990 hours of structured learning time for each student. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 21, 2022, the district will submit updated procedures for developing and obtaining approval of the school schedules. Additionally, the district will submit evidence of training for staff responsible for scheduling.  By November 21, 2022, the district will submit an approved structured learning time worksheet for Hingham Middle School that includes at least 990 hours of structured learning time. |
| **Success Metric:** By the 2022-2023 school year and beyond, Hingham Public Schools will ensure that the Hingham Middle School schedule includes at least 990 hours of structured learning time for each student and is approved by the school committee.  Evidence:   * Procedures and protocols for developing and obtaining approval of schedules * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets * Completed structured learning time worksheet for Hingham Middle School * School committee minutes indicating approval |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each spring, the Hingham Public Schools’ leadership team, including the Superintendent and building principals, will review school schedules for the upcoming academic year to ensure all schedules include sufficient structured learning time. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/21/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
| **Criterion:** CR 10A - Student handbooks and codes of conduct |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the code of conduct contained in the middle and elementary school handbooks does not include procedures assuring due process in disciplinary proceedings. In addition, all district handbooks are missing the complete procedures for the suspension of students with disabilities, students on 504 Accommodation Plans, and students not yet determined eligible for special education. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hingham Public Schools will ensure that the middle and elementary school handbooks include procedures assuring due process in disciplinary proceedings and that all the district’s handbooks include complete procedures for the suspension of students with disabilities, students on 504 Accommodation Plans, and students not yet determined eligible for special education. All revisions will be approved by the school committee and disseminated to the school community. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 21, 2022, the district will submit the relevant updated school handbooks that contain all requirements, including due process in disciplinary hearings and the complete procedures for the suspension of students with disabilities, students on 504 Accommodation Plans, and students not yet determined eligible for special education.  By November 21, 2022, the district will obtain school committee approval of the updated school handbooks.    By February 24, 2023, the district will submit verification from all staff members that they have reviewed the updated handbooks and evidence of dissemination to the school community. |
| **Success Metric:** By February 2023 and beyond, Hingham Public Schools will ensure that the district's school handbooks contain all required elements including appropriate discipline procedures assuring due process in disciplinary proceedings and procedures for the suspension of students with disabilities, students on 504 Accommodation Plans, and students not yet determined eligible for special education.    Evidence:  • Updated handbooks  • School committee meeting minutes indicating approval  • School handbooks or links to handbooks on the district’s website |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each spring, the Hingham Public Schools’ leadership team, including the Superintendent and building principals, will review school handbooks for compliance. |
| **Completion Timeframe:**  02/24/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
| **Criterion:** CR 10B - Bullying Intervention and Prevention |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and interviews indicated that the district's employee policy manual does not contain the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hingham Public Schools will update the employee policy manual so that it contains the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member. The updated policy will be shared with all staff at the start of each school year and with all new staff members upon their employment in the district. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 21, 2022, the district will submit updated employee policy manuals that include the appropriate sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan.    By February 24, 2023, the district will submit evidence of training on the updated employee policy manual and make the policy available to school staff. |
| **Success Metric:** By February 2023 and beyond, the employee policy manual will contain the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member.    Evidence:   * Updated employee policy manual * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Annually, the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and Civil Rights Coordinator will review the employee policy manual to ensure consistency with the regulations and conduct training as appropriate. |
| **Completion Timeframe:**  02/24/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 4** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 17A - Use of physical restraint on any student enrolled in a publicly-funded education program |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and staff interviews indicated that the district has not developed written physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Specifically, the district's procedures do not include methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide; methods for engaging parents and youth in discussions about restraint prevention and use; a description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint; procedures for receiving and investigating complaints; and a procedure for the use of time-out. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hingham Public Schools’ written physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures will include methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide; methods for engaging parents and youth in discussions about physical restraint prevention and use; a description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint; procedures for receiving and investigating complaints; and a procedure for the use of time-out consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. All staff will be trained annually on physical restraint prevention and behavior supports. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 21, 2022, the district will submit the revised physical restraint and behavior support procedures that include all required elements.  By February 24, 2023, the district will submit evidence that all staff have received training on the revised physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures. Additionally, the district will submit evidence of dissemination of the revised procedures to members of the school community. |
| **Success Metric:** By February 2023 and beyond, the district's physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures will be consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Additionally, all district staff will be trained annually on the physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures. Employees hired after the school year begins will be provided with the training within the first month of their employment.  Evidence:  • Revised physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures  • Attendance sheets, agendas, and training materials  • Evidence of dissemination |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and principals will ensure that the physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures are reviewed and updated annually for consistency with the current regulations, all mandated training materials are updated, and all staff are trained annually on the most current restraint regulations. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 02/24/2023 |
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